News on patent, trade mark and design databases on the Internet

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HIGHLIGHTS:

* New Chinese patent databases
* New international WIPO Global Design Database

**ARIPO**, the African international IP office covering mainly those countries formerly part of the British Empire, has launched a new suite of online services at <http://eservice.aripo.org>. This includes searchable and downloadable issues of their official journal starting from 6th March 2015. There is also a function to search and download issues of the official journals of the member states, but this does not appear to have been activated yet. The journal search functionality allows searching of journal entries for patents, trade marks, utility models, or designs by title, applicant name, application or publication number, and publication date. The main search interface similarly covers patents, trade marks, designs and utility models in either ARIPO or individual national systems. The quick search allows keyword searching only. The advanced search allows entry of a command line search statement, but also offers search boxes for keyword, title, registration or application number, registration or application date, and a variety of other fields selectable by pull-down menu. The command line interface allows use of AND, OR, NOT, ORDER (two or more terms within a specific number of words in that order), NEAR (two or more terms within a specific number of words in any order), and SOME (at least two of a set of terms within a specific number of words in any order) operators. Left, right, and double truncation are possible in some fields. The result list can be changed to display bibliographic details, bibliographic details with main image, or bibliographic details with all images. Results can be sorted by application number, registration number, filing date, legal status, or classification (IPC, Locarno, Nice, or Vienna). There is no explicit statement of coverage, but it appears to contain bibliographic data for all ARIPO patent applications, including ones not yet published, but only recent trade marks and designs. Full documents are not usually available. Despite the presence of a “national” tab on the search pages, no national documents appear to have been added at present.

**Australia** has launched the IPGOD (Intellectual Property Government Open Data) project, which provides open data on all forms of IP in Australia since the early twentieth century. The data can be found at <https://data.gov.au/dataset/ntellectual-property-government-open-data-2015>, and is provided as CSV files containing bibliographic and lifecycle data. Most notably, MIIPA files are available which contain standardised and verified data on companies owning different types of IP. It has also been announced that a project is under way to improve the metadata on the AUSPAT patent database for pre-1979 documents, so that bibliographic information such as the title or applicant of a patent can be searched specifically and not solely as part of a full-text search. This may be possible as early as July 2015.

**Belgium** has abandoned its former Brevets Belges database in favour of a new Belgium-specific server of Espacenet, at <http://be.espacenet.com>. There is an e-Register database at <http://bpp.economie.fgov.be/fo-eregister-view/>, which is primarily intended for status searching and can be searched only by number, title, IPC, applicant, inventor, or agent. It also contains file wrapper material for recent applications.

**China** now has two English-language patent databases. The Patent Examination Information Inquiry at <http://www.cpquery.gov.cn/index.jsp?language=en_us> is intended for status searching in relation to international applications for patents, utility models, and registered designs. It covers status of applications from China, but also family members in **Japan, South Korea,** the **USA**, and the **EPO**. The public inquiry service for non-registered users offers searching by application number, title, applicant, IP type, and application date range, for applications since 2010. Full status details and file wrapper documents are then available. The Patent Search and Analysis system at <http://www.pss-system.gov.cn/sipopublicsearch/ensearch/searchEnHomeIndexAC.do> is for general patent searching and covers both Chinese and worldwide documents. The official statement of coverage includes **USA, Japan, South Korea, UK, France, Germany, Switzerland, Russia,** the **EPO,** and **WIPO** PCT applications, but other unspecified countries are also included. The database claims coverage of American, British, French, Swiss and German documents back well into the nineteenth century, but does not appear to hold anything more than very limited bibliographic information for most older material, with coverage being far from exhaustive. Notably, the database includes public official journal details for unpublished **GB** applications, which can otherwise be searched only on the British IPO website version of the official journal. A “Quick Search” offers a single search box that defaults to multiple fields, but can be restricted to “search elements” (title, abstract, claims, and IPC), application or publication numbers, applicant, inventor, or title word. The “Structured Search” offers a search form with the usual variety of options, and a variety of operators, many of which are represented only by letters and unfortunately not explained in English. Registering an account allows access to a specific medicine search, a bilingual English/Chinese IPC search and browse tool, stored search history, lists of saved patents, and patent analysis functionality. The medicine search, as well as standard patent search fields, allows searches by specific chemical names, therapeutic applications, CAS and Chinese chemical index numbers, and Chinese traditional medicine name. Additionally, there are links to databases of pharmaceutical drug substances and Chinese herbs giving basic information about them and their names in both Chinese and English, as well as the Latin taxonomic names of herbs. The initial result list includes basic bibliographic data, while individual patent records also have tabs for full text and original documents. It is possible to filter the result list by patent status, language and date, edit which fields are depicted, and sort by either publication or application date. The patent analysis functionality offers simple analyses by region, IPC, applicant, or inventor, more complex preset analysis topics, or self-created lists or matrices.

The **DesignView** international design database now includes designs from **Turkey**, **Tunisia**, **Croatia**, and **Iceland**.

The “Global Dossier” functionality on **Espacenet**, which provides access to national file wrapper documents, has been extended to cover **Japan** and **South Korea**.

The **European Patent Office**’s “Register Plus” system, at <https://register.epo.org>, has launched its new “Federated Register” functionality displaying bibliographic and status data for national-phase European patents in individual countries. The initial experimental version takes data from **Luxembourg, Serbia**, and **Slovenia**. A “Federated Register” button retrieves the material, and there are also direct hyperlinks to the national status sites.

Two minor improvements have been made to the **German** Depatisnet database, at <https://depatisnet.dpma.de>. Firstly, related and index IPC classes are displayed in the result list. Secondly, if a user returns to the result list after performing a family search, the display will return to the German family member from which the search was initiated, rather than the first page.

**South Korea**’s KIPRIS database at <http://www.kipris.or.kr>, now offers new search fields for “international” publication date and number, and translation document submission date, to search for Korean documents arising from PCT applications.

The **TMView** international trade mark database now includes trade marks from the **Phillippines**.

The **USA** has launched a new “Patent Application Alert Service”, which provides email alerts on publication of patent applications with various characteristics. The tool has its own website at <https://www.uspatentappalerts.com>, and is free to use with registration. It is possible to search for specified terms in title, abstract, description, claims, CPC, applicant name, inventor name, or assignee name. The US has also introduced a web interface to file third-party comments on patent applications, although unlike some other offices that offer this function, a fee is charged. This can be found at <http://www.uspto.gov/patent/initiatives/third-party-preissuance-submissions.html>.

**WIPO**’s. **PatentScope** database now offers the option to translate result lists and patent texts between languages using Google, Bing/Microsoft, and Baidu translation engines as well as the in-house WIPO one. The **Global Brand Database** of trade marks now includes marks from **Laos.** A **Global Design Database** has also been launched, at <http://www.wipo.int/designdb/en/index.jsp>. It uses the same interface as the Global Brand Database. Searchable fields include product indication and description in English, French or Spanish; Locarno or Canadian national design classifications, holder, creator, or representative name; application or registration number; filing, publication, registration, or priority date; and designated or residential country. The fields in the result list can be edited, but the default is registration number, authority, holder, registeration date, classification, product description, designated states, number of designs, and (very small) thumbnail. Lists can be further filtered by authority, designated state, Locarno class, registration date, or contracting party. At present the database contains material from the **Hague Agreement** international system, **Canada**, and **New Zealand**.